



# Flood all or some fallowed fields

## What to do:

If water is available, flood all or portions of fallowed areas 4-to-12 inches deep from October 1 to March 1 to benefit wintering waterfowl and water-associated birds. To provide waterfowl brood habitat, flood fields from 4-to-12 inches deep from March 1 to August 15. It's best not to flood areas that already have dense nesting cover, especially after April 1; too many nests will be destroyed.

When water supplies are limited, take advantage of winter rains by adding a flash-board to your water control structure and allow the lower portions of your fields to flood. This extremely popular practice should attract a surprising array of migratory birds to your farm.

## Regulatory agencies to contact:

Irrigation District, NRCS, USFWS, and Corps. Note: The Sacramento District office of the Army Corps of Engineers affirms that agricultural lands that are temporarily idle (out of production for five years or less) and are voluntarily flooded in winter or spring are *not* considered wetlands and are *not* subject to regulation under Section 404 of

the Clean Water Act. However, if your fallowed land lies adjacent to a waterway and is periodically inundated by flood waters, request a written jurisdictional determination from the Corps *before* you flood.

## Benefits:

- Provides excellent shorebird and waterfowl habitat if flooded in the fall; shorebirds migrating north again are attracted to the drained fields in the spring.

- Offers abundant seed and invertebrate food sources for wintering waterfowl when second or third year fallowed areas are flooded in fall.

- Offers excellent brood habitat for waterfowl and green feed and insects for young pheasants when fallowed fields are flooded between February and August.

- Controls Johnson grass and other noxious weeds when flooding occurs for at least two consecutive months during the spring and summer.

- Contributes to ground water recharge.

- Offers an additional source of income by providing excellent duck hunting opportunities.

*Flood fallowed fields to enhance their value for wildlife. If water supplies are limited, let winter rains flood the lower portions of fields by adding a flash-board to the water control structure.*



GLEN ROULINS